

February 1st 1904.

Gentlemen,

I beg to lay before you my Report for the year 1903.

The Area of the District is 30,521 acres and the Population 7,884.

It lies near the sea and is an undulating valley with low hills, on the South side of a range of chalk and limestone hills, from 400 to 600 feet high; from these hills flow streams of good water, on which several of the Villages are situated.

The Number of births is 212 - at the rate of 26.6 per thousand.

The Number of deaths is 90 - at the rate of 11.4 per thousand.

The average age at death of persons living in the District was 44 years. There were two deaths from Zymotic disease, one from measles at Osmington and the second from Scarlet fever, a child from outside the District, who died in the Radipole Isolation Hospital belonging to the Borough of Weymouth: giving the low Zymotic death rate of 0.1 per thousand.

Infant mortality.

Eighteen children died under one year, giving a rate of 84.9 for every thousand of births registered.

This high infant mortality includes very young children from one to six days old, for whom the cause of death was returned as:-

"Insufficient vitality."

"Premature birth."

and "Debility from birth."

This has been a healthy year. Only seventeen cases of infectious disease were notified, fourteen of these were from Scarlet fever - five of which were treated in the Isolation Hospital, with advantage to themselves and with diminished danger of infection to the children in the neighbourhood.

Water Supply.

This is exceptionally good. There are three large public mains and three smaller ones, which between them supply most of the District. The large mains supply upland water from the green sand of the hills

and two of the smaller ones are of the same character, but at Langton Herring good water is pumped up from a deep well by a windmill.

At Bincombe the wet season has filled the Wells, but the improvements, suggested for the protection of the water in the principal well at the lower end of the village, have not yet been carried out and at Mr Cake's Farm, some of the Cottagers have to fetch their water from an inconvenient distance. In Stottingway, Upwey, although a pipe has been laid from the main, only one owner has taken advantage of it and the people living in the other houses still go to the river, which is unfit for drinking purposes.

There are no Public sewers other than those of the new Drainage Works, which are now nearing completion at Wyke Regis and when finished will do away with that long standing nuisance, the large open ditch which runs through the Village.

In some parts of the District, as at Chickerell, the Drainage, together with surface water, discharges into field ditches which are cleared out when required, during this wet year we have had little trouble with them.

In Wyke Regis, house refuse is collected by a scavenger twice a week and carted away on the farms whilst in other parts the pail system is generally in vogue.

At Upwey and Broadway, building is still going on, and on the Dorchester Road, the houses being well supplied with water and W. Cs. with cess-pools. These soon become filled and the overflow is beginning to cause trouble and will, at no distant period, press for attention.

The very objectionable custom of the Borough of Weymouth casting and depositing their refuse in the Rural District has given much trouble this Winter, but as their Destructor is now at work we need not expect this nuisance in the future.

The new Isolation Hospital, which was hastily erected to receive cases of small pox in 1902, is at present fitted up with eight beds, which may be increased to sixteen, if necessary. It was found very useful in May when two small outbreaks of Scarlet fever occurred - one in a family of ten at Upwey and the other in a very poor family at Charlestown. We may consider the Isolation of these children prevented the disease from spreading - at any rate no new cases occurred after they were removed.



The Patients got on remarkably well in the Hospital and reflected credit on the Caretaker and also on the healthiness of the Situation.

Housing of the working classes.

Two cases of overcrowding were reported and dealt with by sending some of the inmates away from home and re-arranging the sleeping rooms.

In some of the Villages there is need for a better class of cottage. This remark applies especially to Preston and Sutton Poyntz.

Factory & Workshop Act 1901.

This Act, which came into force on January 1st 1902, makes this Council responsible for the supervision of Workshops and Work-places in the District; our three factories being under the control of the Home Office. Here we have Dressmaker's work rooms, Joiner's and Smith's work shops and Laundries with Bake-houses in many of the Villages. I have visited these, accompanied by your Inspector, and found their condition generally satisfactory. There are no underground Bakehouses. I have also visited several of the Slaughter houses and suggested improvements in their drainage and flooring, where needed.

I have the honour to remain Gentlemen.

Yours faithfully,

William Hawkins.

Medical Officer of Health.

Broadway.

Lancaster.

